

4. (Original) The composition of claim 3, wherein the microgel has a ratio of the macroviscosity of the microgel to the microviscosity of the microgel is 10,000 or less.

5. (Original) The composition of claim 1, wherein the polyanionic polymer is functionalized to provide one or more pendant functional groups selected from hydroxy, acyl halide, chloroformate, and mercapto; and wherein the linking moiety provides crosslinking and is a reaction product of the pendant groups between polymer segments or between the pendant groups and complementing functions groups of a linking group.

6. (Original) The composition of claim 5, wherein the linking agent is the diacrylate of an α,ω -diol or the diacrylate of a chain extended α,ω -diol.

7. Previously cancelled.

REMARKS

After amendment, claims 1-6 remain pending in the present application. Claim 7 was previously cancelled canceled in the response to the Restriction Requirement of January 7, 2003. No amendment has been made to distinguish over the art of record. A review of the present claims in comparison to the disclosures cited against the instant application evidences that the presently claimed compositions are clearly patentable over the disclosures of the cited art. None of the prior art references cited against the instant application disclose or even remotely suggest polymer compositions as they are presently claimed.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103 as being invalid for the reasons which have been stated in the office action. Applicants will address the Examiner's rejection hereinbelow.